

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Armored Train Battalion at Milovice

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. The armored train battalion at Milovice is directly subordinate to the Czech General Staff through the headquarters of the First District Tank Corps. The Battalion Commander is Major Bartosik, a former Social Democrat. The battalion is composed of a steam train company, a motor train company and a replacement company. The full strength of the battalion is four motor trains and eight steam trains, but at present only two motor trains and three or four steam trains are available. Locomotives, cars, and equipment are kept in a depot on a special rail spur near the Milovice railroad station.
2. The steam armored train consists of the following equipments:
 - a. There are several types of armored locomotives, all of German manufacture. The largest of them, equipped with a steam condenser, weighs more than 200 tons and is capable of a maximum speed of 65 kms. per hour. The locomotives and cars of the steam armored train are obsolete.
 - b. Each train carries two gun cars weighing about 11 tons each and armed with 75 mm rifles, German model 44, and German model 42 air-cooled machine guns. All guns can be rotated 360°. They are enclosed in turrets rotated either by hand or electrically. The armor is thickest about the turrets, about 10 cms, while the rest of the car has armor plate about 2-4 cms. thick. About 70-80 rounds of artillery ammunition and about 2,500 rounds for each machine gun are stored in the turrets and in boxes on the floor of the car. Each car is equipped with ultra-short wave German UKWS radio equipment as well as inter-car telephones. In case of the failure of these means of communications, there are horns at the battle stations.
 - c. The two tank cars of the steam armored train resemble the undercarriages used by the American army to transport tanks along the highway, except that the Czech cars are armored to the level of the tank tracks. These cars carry old Praga 38 tanks and are attached behind the gun cars by automatic coupling.
 - d. The machine gun command car is longer than the others and weighs about 12-15 tons. It is equipped with four heavy machine guns, light machine guns, and samopaly (sic) for the use of the reconnaissance patrol which is carried by the command car. On this car is the radio and telephone center for the train and several engineers and railroad technicians. The command car is equipped with two short wave transmitters in addition to inter-car communications equipment.

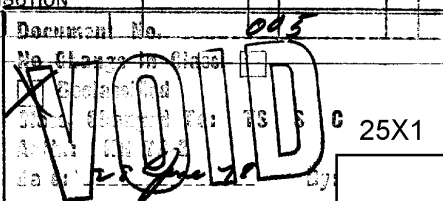
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-2-

25X1

- e. The antiaircraft machine gun car carries a 4-barrel antiaircraft machine gun in an armored turret on the roof of the car in addition to four heavy machine guns.
- f. Two mortar-carrying cars, built on suspended undercarriages weigh more than 20 tons each. They are equipped with four mortars, with a caliber of about 12 cm., placed two at each end of the car. In addition, there are four heavy machine guns and two light portable mortars. The car's armor is 1-2 cms. thick and welded.
- g. In addition to the above cars, each train carries a quarters car with a kitchen and offices. On the newer trains, the armor is thicker and the guns are of larger caliber.
3. Each car of the motor armored train has its own engine, usually a 420 horsepower Steier engine with a maximum speed of 80 kms. per hour. Each car has a fuel capacity of about 200 liters and a range of about 400 kms. These cars are capable of fighting individually or as a unit. They are lower than the cars of the steam armored train, and there are no tank cars in the motor train.
4. At the end of 1948 and during the first months of 1949 experiments were carried out near Milovice with a new weapon, the "Stalin organ", mounted on a railroad undercarriage. This was a former mortar-carrying armored car on which were mounted 18 rocket launchers in three rows of six. Each barrel was more than a meter in length and capable of being rotated 360°. For loading, each rocket launcher was lowered below the level of the roof of the car. It was reported that pointers and sighting equipment might be located in an adjacent car and that loading could be made completely automatic. The range of the rocket was reported to be about 20 km. although during the trials they were held down to 10 km. because of the limited area of the training grounds. Experimental cars were guarded by selected patrols of the VTU.

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